



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

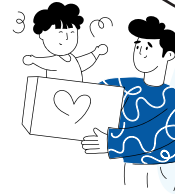
What is Fatherhood Engagement?

An “engaged father” is defined as a man who...

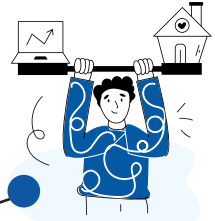
... feels responsible for and behaves responsibly toward his child,



provides financial support to sustain the child’s needs,



is emotionally engaged and physically accessible,



and is involved in childcare and making decisions in the child’s life.

➤ Alternatively, **Fatherhood absence** describes fathers who have had no physical interaction with their child and has provided no emotional, physical, or financial support to their child within the last 12 months.

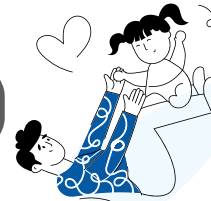
Fatherhood Engagement vs Father Presence

Fatherhood engagement is not just about being physically in the home with children, or fatherhood presence.

Fathers can be present in the home and uninvolved, therefore they are not engaged.

Fatherhood engagement involves a father or father figure’s actions to support the healthy development of their child.

This includes...



physical play,

caregiving activities,



and activities that stimulate the child’s cognitive development.

Why are engaged fathers important?

Children with loving and engaged father figures are:

43% more likely to earn A’s in school and

33% less likely to repeat a grade



2X as likely to go to college or find stable employment after high school

75% less likely to have a teen birth



80% less likely to be incarcerated

50% less likely to experience multiple depression symptoms

